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UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 03 ANKARA 007190

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SUBJECT: ANKARA MEDIA REACTION REPORT

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 28, 2004

THIS REPORT PRESENTS THE TURKISH PRESS SUMMARY UNDER THREE THEMES:

HEADLINES

BRIEFING

EDITORIAL OPINION

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HEADLINES

MASS APPEAL

Tsunami Hits 2,950 Turks in South Asia As Well - Aksam

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[1M](#). Dobbs of Washington Post: It Was Like Noah's Flood - Sabah

Iraqi Sunnis to Boycott Upcoming Elections - Aksam

Papadopoulos Defends Greek Cypriot Rejection of Annan Plan

Israel Releases 159 Palestinians in Goodwill Effort - Aksam

First Israeli Withdrawal From Gaza - Sabah

OPINION MAKERS

FM Gul to pay first foreign visit to Israel next week - Radikal

146,971 Turkish Cypriots to Vote at Early Polls - Yeni Safak

US Troops Sell Iraqi Corpses' Organs - Yeni Safak

Assassination Attempt Against El-Hakim - Yeni Safak

Bin Ladin Calls For Boycott of Iraqi Elections - Radikal

West Wins in Ukraine - Yeni Safak

US Will Continue to Lead Global Economy in 2005 - Radikal

BRIEFING

Thousands of Turks Reportedly Missing in Southeast Asia: Turkish papers estimate 3,000-3,500 Turks were caught up in the earthquake and tsunami in southeast Asia, which claimed at least 30,000 lives. Ankara has sent a plane to the Maldives to fetch around 300 Turkish citizens who are stranded there. The press reports that 30 Turks have not been accounted for after the disaster.

FM Gul Due in Israel: FM Abdullah Gul will visit Israel and Palestine January 4-5 for consultations with top leaders in the two countries, papers report. Tel Aviv, looking forward to the Gul visit, will tell the Turkish FM that the Israelis would like to host PM Erdogan as well, "Zaman" claims. In a goodwill gesture, Israel has released 159 Palestinian prisoners on the eve of Palestine presidential elections.

US Troops Involved in Organ Trafficking: The Islamist-oriented "Yeni Safak" cites a report in Saudi Arabia's official daily "Al-Vatan" claiming that 'systematic involvement in organ trafficking by US troops serving in Iraq.' The report is based on 'secret European military sources.' Syria's influential daily "Tersin" also carried the report, "Yeni Safak" notes. US military doctors in Iraq allegedly help American soldiers to transfer organs from Iraqi corpses to the American market. US doctors immediately carve out organs of Iraqis killed or wounded for transfer to the US, the report claims, adding that some corpses have also been decapitated. US teams pay Iraqis \$25-40 to inform about the location of the heavily wounded or killed Iraqis, according to the report. The "Al-Vatan" story also claims that some inmates who have died at Abu Ghraib prison have undergone similar 'operations' to remove their organs.

Five Turks remain in Abu Ghraib Prison: "Yeni Safak" also reports that five Turkish nationals are still being held at Abu Ghraib prison for allegedly supporting insurgents in Iraq. The report is based on comments attributed to Iraq's Human Rights Minister, Bahtiyar Muhammed Emin.

Abducted Turkish Worker Still Alive in Iraq: A Turkish national who has been missing in Iraq for one month has been seen alive in footage posted on the internet by insurgents, papers report. Faith Nergiz, 30, was reportedly working for a US company in Iraq when he was abducted.

US Troops Raid ITF Bureau: Turkey's "Dogan News Agency"

(DHA) reports from Kirkuk that US troops raided and destroyed the Iraqi Turkmen Front (ITF) office in the town of Yayci, near Kirkuk. The ITF is demanding an apology, according to the report, which was first seen on Turkmen-controlled television.

**Kurds Flock to Kirkuk to Escape Killings; Few Fallujans Return Home:** Papers carry "Reuters" wire reports claiming that over 500 Kurdish families have recently moved to Kirkuk in an attempt to escape deadly attacks on Kurds in the northern Iraqi town of Havica. Meanwhile, about 8,000 Fallujans have returned home, only to leave again after seeing that their houses have been destroyed in the fighting, "Aksam" reports. Only a few people from the town have decided to stay, according to US General Erv Lessel.

**American Families Help Iraqi War Victims:** Families of US troops killed in Iraq have donated \$600,000 to Iraqi war victims who were forced to leave their homes in Fallujah, reports Turkey's all-news channel "NTV." Some members of US victims' families told the press how terrible they felt after seeing the desperation of Iraqis fleeing their hometown that had to be destroyed by the American army. "We want to show the war victims in Iraq that somebody cares for them," said one American mother.

**Kissinger Suggests Possible Division of Iraq:** Former US Secretary of State Henry Kissinger told CNN-International

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that the United States should accept the division of Iraq along ethnic lines if a Shiite theocracy emerges from the January 30 elections. In that case, the US may decide to allow all competing groups in the country to establish their own governments, Kissinger said. Kissinger also advised the US administration to seek help from countries like Turkey, Russia, and India in its efforts to stabilize Iraq.

**EDITORIAL OPINION:**

? ASIAN QUAKE  
? UKRAINE  
? CYPRUS/IRAQ

**"The Power of Nature Cannot Be Overcome, But."** Sami Kohen wrote in the mass appeal "Milliyet" (12/28): "The devastating earthquakes and tsunamis in South Asia once again reminded us of the colossal power of nature and the helplessness of human beings. There is no way to stop natural disasters like this, but there are ways to arrange early warning systems that could reduce the number of casualties. Unlike in North America and the Pacific, South Asian countries do not have an early warning system that might have helped to save lives in this disaster. . South Asia grieves and tries to heal its wounds, but still suffers from insufficient health services and a lack of food. The international community is sending condolences and promises of assistance. When Iran experienced the terrible earthquake in Bam that claimed 30,000 lives, the international community promised a billion dollars in aid, but in the end only 17 million dollars was given. Oddly enough, when it comes to arms, billions are spent without any hesitation."

**"Who is next?** Erdal Safak commented in the mass appeal "Sabah" (12/28): "Yushchenko has declared victory, and this has brought the hopes of Yanukovic to an end. The same goes for Putin, who strongly supported Yanukovic. The election victory for Yushchenko is like a Christmas gift for Europe, but it may be somewhat of a poisoned chalice. The supporters of Yushchenko, including Poland, Lithuania, and Italy, have started pushing the EU for a promise of membership for Ukraine. Brussels does not seem ready to deal with the accession of Ukraine to the EU for fear of a backlash in Russia. . Close ties between Ukraine and the EU also remind us of the fact that Russia is losing ground. We first saw this in Serbia, then in Georgia and now Ukraine. But this won't be the last."

**"The Cyprus-Iraq Connection"** Cengiz Candar wrote in the conservative "DB Tercuman" (12/28): "In recent days, CHP leader Deniz Baykal has described the most important 'formula' for putting the Cyprus issue on the road to a solution and taking away the 'diplomatic cards' that could be played by Greek Cypriot leader Tassos Papadopoulos. Baykal gave clues to the most realistic way out of the Cyprus deadlock. He noted that the US could be very influential in this process. 'Let the Americans send a ship from the sixth fleet to a port in north Cyprus, and let them fly planes directly to Ercan Airport - then the Greek Cypriots will understand how serious the situation is,' he said. Baykal is 100 percent right. But this assumes that Turkish and American foreign policy are held on the same wavelength. Otherwise, official

calls for help from Turkey may be met in Washington with nothing more than raised eyebrows. Yasemin Congar laid this out in yesterday's "Milliyet," when she described how some US officials believe that Turkish public opinion has been 'poisoned' against the United States through anti-US statements on issues ranging from Tal Afar to Fallujah to the attack against Turkish security personnel in Mosul. The AKP needs to clarify its policy. If it is going to stake out anti-American positions on Iraq together with Iran and Syria, it won't be able to develop a joint position with the EU and the US on the Cyprus issue. The AKP must define its priorities. If the priority is to start EU accession talks on October 3, 2005, and, within that framework, to launch a new Cyprus initiative, then other aspects of foreign policy must be made consistent with that goal. The government will not be able to pull out what it needs on the Cyprus issue by continuing its anti-American trend on Iraq."

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